

# The New England Fisheries

*A Treasure Greater than Gold*

PAUL FORSYTHE JOHNSTON

The Russell W. Knight Collection of New England Fishing Scenes

Peabody Museum of Salem



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PEABODY MUSEUM OF SALEM Salem, Massachusetts, 1984



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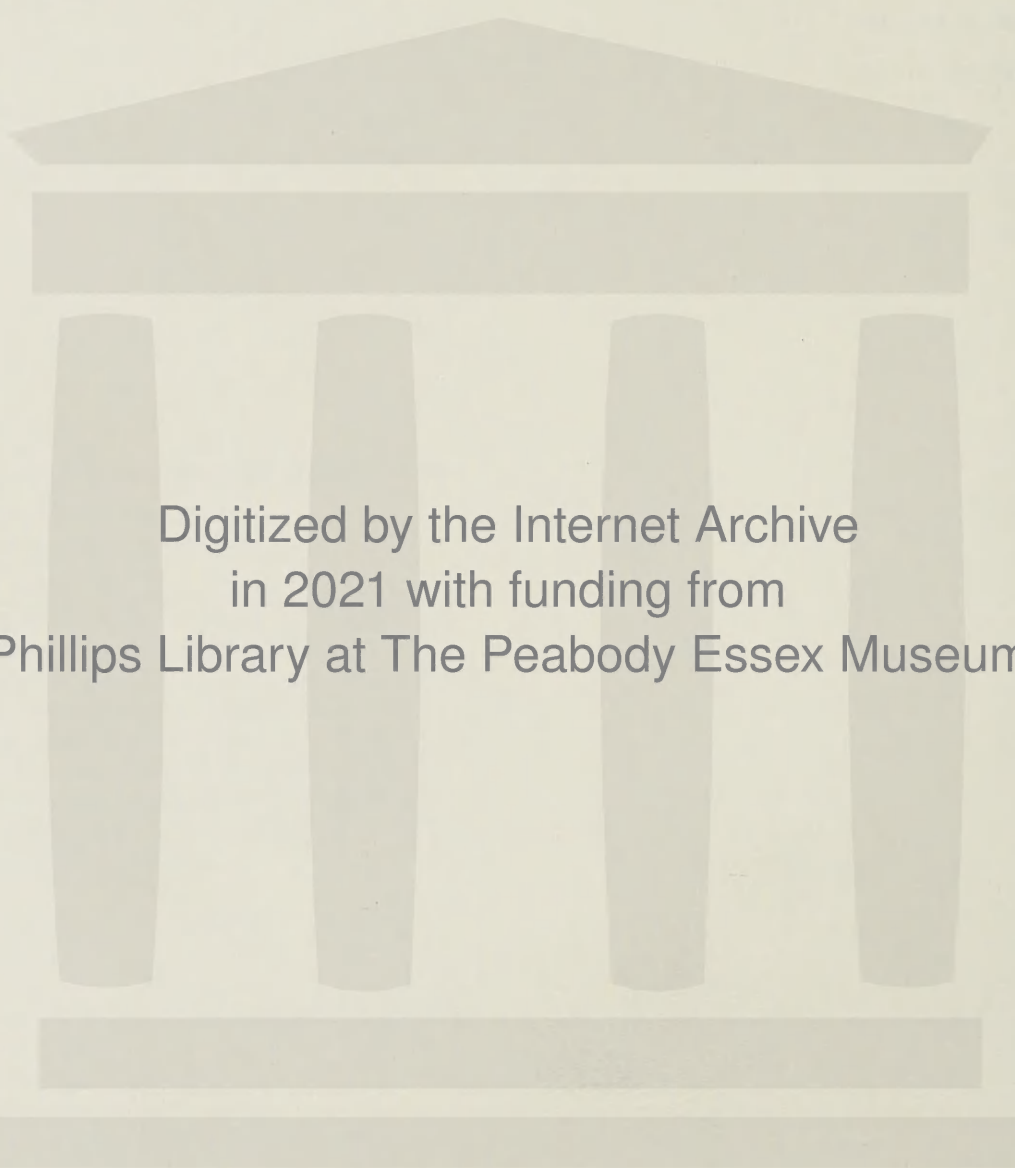
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# Preface

Those having a way with plants that flourish under their care are said to have a green thumb. An appropriate appellation, preferably maritime, that describes those having similar effects on institutions such as the Peabody Museum, is lacking. Nonetheless, Russell W. Knight fits this description admirably and has for almost two decades fostered a paternalistic attitude that has guided the Peabody Museum during a period of florescence unparalleled in its long history.

Since 1958 he has served as Honorary Curator of Manuscripts, and when appointed a Trustee in 1966, he became also Chairman of a development committee charged with the mission of assessing the Museum's needs and planning for its future growth. With skills honed in the industrial real estate business, Russell took seriously his task and soon assembled the land on which the Museum's new Dodge Wing was dedicated on Patriots' Day, 19 April 1976.

His footsteps, heard often at the Museum, seem always to quicken to some lively tune, perhaps "Marblehead Forever (God Bless the Good Old Town)," for there lie his roots. A scholar and an enthusiastic supporter of the maritime history department, he has made many contributions to the Museum's journal of maritime history, *The American Neptune*, and has assembled exhibits such as "Maritime Marblehead" in 1966 and "The New England Fishing Industry" in 1977. He serves also on the Museum's Visiting Committee on Maritime History and on the Editorial Advisory Board of *The American Neptune*.

The influences that prompted him to begin to collect paintings, prints, and other memorabilia related to the New England fishing industries are many. These include his ancestry and his upbringing in the old fishing town of Marblehead and his understanding of the "sacred cod's" social, economic and historic significance for New England. These factors have no doubt had their effect in directing his pursuits; however, there is one paramount factor which reflects Russell's longterm commitment to the Museum and his sensitivity to its needs. Some time ago in discussions with former Director Ernest S. Dodge, he learned of the paucity of material in the Museum's fishing collection, and true to his character, embarked enthusiastically on a course that would rectify any inadequacies. To that end he often outlined in advance scenes, events and activities which he felt would best illustrate a calling presently undergoing many dramatic changes and innovations.

His acquisitions, organized here by him and Curator Paul Johnston, form a lasting memorial to the fishermen of New England.

Peter J. Fetchko, Director

## Acknowledgements

This catalog was prepared in conjunction with a special exhibition of the same name opening at the Peabody Museum on 1 June 1984. Many people contributed to this project, and it is a pleasure to have this opportunity to thank those involved for their assistance.

At the Peabody Museum, A. Paul Winfisky, Gregor Trinkaus-Randall and Geraldine Ayers helped in the preparation of this manuscript. Campbell Seamans and volunteers William R. Barton and Gilbert R. Payson provided research assistance, and I am grateful to Museum photographer Markham W. Sexton and the Peabody's exhibition production staff for their aid in readying the catalog and exhibit.

Erik A. R. Ronnberg, Jr. was kind enough to look over the catalog text, and his helpful suggestions were much appreciated and are most gratefully acknowledged. Benjamin A. G. Fuller and Stuart Parnes of Mystic Seaport Museum also were most generous with their comments and advice concerning some of the scenes in the exhibition, and S. Morton Vose II contributed to the artists' index at the end of this work.

Final thanks are reserved for Russell W. Knight, that quintessential Marbleheader whose longstanding and most vigorous support of the Peabody Museum is legendary among both the Museum's staff and friends. Russell's presence is felt throughout every level of the Peabody, from his seat at the Friday luncheon table to his position among the trustees, and we are the stronger for it.

April 1984

Paul Forsythe Johnston, Ph.D.

*Curator of Maritime History*



# Introduction

In the year 1614, the English captain John Smith visited the shores of New England in search of whales and new sources of gold, silver and copper to replenish the exchequer of his monarch. Although he was not the first European to visit the region, he was certainly the most eloquent in his description of the area's bountiful natural resources. In his account of this voyage, *The Generall Historie of New-England* (London, 1616), Smith was forced to admit that he had found whales but could not catch them, and that he had been unable to locate any gold or silver mines. However, in an effort to justify his voyage and promote his personal interests, Smith discussed at great length and in exhaustive detail a treasure he considered of greater value than gold: the lowly fish. He enumerated no fewer than twenty-eight different varieties of fish and shellfish available in New England's waters, stating that

“ . . . the salvages (sic) compare the store in the sea with the haire of their heads, and surely there are an incredible abundance upon this coast . . . this is the chieftest mine, and the Sea the source of those silver streames of all their vertue . . . ”

In fact, Spanish, English, French and Portuguese fishermen had begun fishing the rich offshore banks off Newfoundland more than a century before Smith's voyage, and archaeological evidence indicates that local Indians had been gathering shellfish along New England's coastline as early as 6,000 BC.

During the colonial period, fishing was New England's most important and widespread industry. Of the manifold species catalogued by Smith, the cod was foremost, a position it held for more than 200 years. Initially, comparatively little of the catch was locally consumed; the majority was shipped to England in the 1620s in payment of debts incurred by the colonists. Gradually, however, new markets were developed, and the fish were divided into three categories of quality. The highest grade was exported to Catholic Spain, Portugal and France, where it fetched the best price. The middle grade was consumed locally or traded with the Dutch on the Hudson, the southern colony in Virginia, the Portuguese islands in the Atlantic and the British colony in Jamaica. The third grade, known as “refuse fish,” was exported to the British islands in the Caribbean, where it fed the slaves on the sugar plantations.

In recognition of the importance of the industry to her economy, Britain enacted numerous measures providing incentives to the colonial fishermen, such as land grants, bounties,

tax and military service exemptions and allowances, and consequently the industry expanded rapidly. By 1675, New England was sending some 665 vessels on two or more annual trips to the fishing grounds off Newfoundland and Labrador and was landing up to 400,000 quintals of fish each year. Aside from the direct income for the fishermen, this high volume of trade had the additional benefit of providing opportunities for a number of fishing-related enterprises including shipbuilding and outfitting, textile, cordage, net, bait and container production, salting, shipping, marketing, fish curing and many others.

Throughout the colonial period, the New England fishing industry was centered in Massachusetts. Fishing in Maine was undertaken from shore stations and camps manned by outsiders, and New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Connecticut had too little population and limited inshore fishing grounds to support a regular, organized industry. Foremost among Massachusetts fishing towns was Marblehead, where in the 1630s a Plymouth citizen, Isaac Allerton, had established a fishing fleet of eight vessels. Slightly over a century later, the town boasted a fleet of 160 vessels averaging fifty tons each, which landed approximately 200,000 quintals of fish annually, valued at \$600,000. Marblehead was followed in descending order of importance by Gloucester, Plymouth, Salem and other, smaller towns. Just before the Revolution, 4,405 New Englanders were directly employed in the fisheries; a figure that does not include the related businesses.

The industry continued to expand steadily until the advent of war: first the Revolution and later the War of 1812. The Revolution proved especially devastating, as able seamen, particularly those familiar with the local waters, were needed to man naval vessels and privateers. Privateering was particularly popular, for far more money could be made from sharing in a single prize than from several years of fishing. Many of the faster fishing vessels were converted to privateers, while unsuitable vessels rotted at the wharves for lack of crew. The wharves and other shore-related facilities also suffered from neglect. After the war, there were severe manpower shortages; many fishermen who had survived the conflict elected to remain in military service, while the next generation lacked the proper training. Moreover, British proclamations and unfavorable treaty provisions relating to the fishing industry limited both the fishing grounds and the markets formerly open to the colonists. No sooner had the industry begun to recover from the effects of the War for Independence than the War of 1812 commenced, with similar consequences. However, shortly after war's end, the New England fisheries entered their period of greatest activity as a result of political stability in the region, increased population growth and demand for the product, as well as continued governmental support and incentives. During the postwar period, Maine became an important fishing center as immigrants from both Massachusetts and the British Provinces to the north settled in the area. Activity also increased proportionately in the other New England states.

In order to meet increased demand, the offshore banks off Canada became more heavily



exploited, and new types of fishing vessels capable of extended voyages evolved in the early nineteenth century. Additional, more efficient methods of catching fish were also developed concurrently. Earlier, the offshore grounds had been fished using handlines from the decks of vessels, and similar techniques were used in the inshore fisheries, along with weirs and nets to a lesser extent. However, around mid-century the purse seine began to be used, and trawling from dories also became common practice. Later, in the 1880s, gill netting was introduced from Norway and proved especially popular in the inshore cod fisheries of Massachusetts. Like the purse seine, it required no bait and caught larger and more fish than handlining or trawling from boats.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, the mackerel joined the cod as a principal food fish, and eventually surpassed it in the volume landed. Later in the century, halibut (formerly a trash fish), herring, haddock and various sorts of shellfish also gained popularity in the marketplace. Part of the reason for the increased demand for these species was the advent in the 1840s of icing the catch aboard the fishing vessels while they were at sea, thereby allowing a fresher, better tasting product to be marketed. Earlier, most New England fish were salted as they were caught, washed and dried on fish flakes after landing and then transported to market. Depending upon the species and their respective markets, the fish could also be smoked or pickled in brine, although these methods of curing were less prevalent than salting. Along with icing, experiments with canning began in the 1840s using techniques imported from France. However, these initial efforts were unsuccessful, and it was not until the 1870s that canning, particularly of herring (sardines) and mackerel, became widespread.

New uses for various waste and by-products from fish also emerged in the same period as the industry began expanding, so that very little of the fish was wasted. Heads, tails and bones could be ground up and the resulting fish meal used as fertilizer and animal feed. Glue was manufactured from the skins of dried cod and cusk, while fish sounds (swim bladders) were saved and used in the manufacture of isinglass, a product employed for beer and wine clarification. Fish oil derived either from livers or whole fish had several applications, ranging from vitamin supplements to currying leather in tanneries, fueling coal mine lamps, manufacturing rope and soap, general lubrication, and as an ingredient in paint and tick dip for sheep. Some fish, such as the menhaden, never made it to the table at all; it was either slivered and used as bait, ground up into meal or rendered into oil. By the later nineteenth century, the menhaden oil industry had grown so large that it out-produced all other oil industries combined, and today the menhaden represents nearly forty percent of the nation's total commercial landings.

The rapid expansion of the entire nation's transportation network in the mid-nineteenth century also had a significant impact upon New England's fishing industry. The opening of the Erie Canal and the growth of rail connections between New England and the Midwest

created new markets in areas of the country previously inaccessible. In 1846, Gloucester acquired a direct rail line to Boston, and this factor, along with its fine harbor, proximity to the major inshore fishing grounds and the famous gale of 1846 which destroyed a large portion of Marblehead's fishing fleet, combined to make Gloucester the largest and most important fishing port in New England. Meanwhile, Boston, which had always been the region's major commercial center, became the most active marketing and distribution point for the region's fresh fisheries products as well, despite the relatively small size of its own fishing fleet. In his monumental series *The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States* (Washington, 1884–87), George Brown Goode stated that in 1880 there were 29,838 professional fishermen in New England, of which slightly more than half were in Massachusetts. Together, the New England states supplied approximately one third of the nation's total output, with the bulk of the remainder coming from the southern Atlantic and Pacific Northwest fisheries.

Competition from these other regions and from the burgeoning cattle business in the west, and the depletion of certain species of fish in the Northeast caused a regional decline in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. However, in the early part of the present century improvements in fishing technology led to a renewed growth in the industry. Among the most important developments was the adoption of engines by the fleet; first steam, then gasoline and finally diesel. Initially, these were installed as auxiliaries to the offshore schooner fleet, since only the menhaden fishery had utilized steamships to any degree in the nineteenth century. Engines provided the fishing vessels greater range in their fishing grounds and also permitted faster trips to and from the grounds. At first, there was considerable resistance to motor vessels among the offshore fleet, since the highly refined schooners were so swift, but by the 1920s nearly all of the New England fishing fleet was engine-powered.

Another innovation, the otter trawl, encountered even greater initial resistance. This type of net, introduced to New England from England in 1905, consisted of a large bag-shaped net, closed at one end and held open at the other by a pair of door-shaped otter boards. The net was dragged along the sea bottom, sweeping everything in its path into the open mouth. Among the drawbacks of the otter trawl were the indiscriminate entrapment of undersized and immature fish (which could deplete the breeding stock), the potential destruction of the sea bottom where the fish spawn and feed and the high costs for the system. This latter factor forced many of the smaller individually or family-owned concerns out of business, resulting in the emergence of larger, better capitalized companies which owned fleets of vessels.

These developments in the offshore end of the industry were matched by equally important achievements in the shore-based support enterprises. In Boston, a large fish pier opened in 1914 which provided more efficient docking facilities and a modern marketplace



for the fresh fish trade. In the early 1920s, the process of filleting, now the mainstay of the industry, was developed and proved an instant success. Together with improvements in refrigeration and transportation (especially the railroads and trucking industry), it made fish and fish products easier to obtain and prepare than ever before.

Despite these advances, the importance of the fishing industry in New England has gradually declined since its earlier heyday, as has the region's overall impact on the national fishing industry. High labor costs, and increasing competition both on the grounds and in the marketplace from other areas of the country and other countries as well have lessened the volume of landings and the dollar value of the regional catch. Although Boston continues to serve as New England's primary fresh fish market, New Bedford has superseded historic Gloucester as the district's largest fishing port. However, these two ports continue to rank among the top ten national fishing ports in the dollar value of fish landed. Within the region, Massachusetts continues to lead Maine both in landings and in their value, and by the same criteria New England ranks third nationally after the Gulf and Pacific Coast and Alaskan fisheries.

Historically, fishing has always been one of the most dangerous and physically demanding vocations known to man. Nowhere has this been more evident than in New England, with its harsh climate and unpredictable weather. Nevertheless, from the earliest settlements along its shores to the present day, fishing has played a pivotal role in the social and economic history of the region; a role that continues to provide thousands of its inhabitants with a livelihood and the nation with an important source of food and diversified industrial products.

\* \* \*

The materials in this exhibition display a broad spectrum of styles, media, dates and subject matter and are not easily categorized. With a very few exceptions, the nineteenth and early twentieth century artists represented were native New Englanders, and most of the remainder spent extended portions of their lives in the region. Many received formal academic training in the arts, while others were entirely self-taught. Some were commercial artists; others pursued their craft less as a vocation than as an avocation. Similar statements may be made for the contemporary artists, although perhaps a higher proportion of them are professionals, who produce and exhibit their work on a regular basis.

Some of the earliest materials are prints taken from news magazines such as *Harper's Weekly* or *Gleason's Pictorial* of the mid-1850s, when the New England fishing industry was undergoing its period of greatest change and expansion. Other prints were produced as recently as 1980, although they may offer views of various historic aspects of the local fisheries. Similarly, the dated paintings range from 1875 to 1984. However, a few exam-

ples are undoubtedly earlier than 1875, and at least two works commissioned by Russell Knight have not yet been completed at this writing.

The subjects chosen by the artists are equally as diverse as the artists themselves. Several of the works record specific historical events, while others are peripatetic genre scenes, illustrating such commonplace activities as sailing to and from the grounds, hauling in the catch or working on deck or in a dory.

Many artists have focused upon the hardships encountered by fishermen while at sea: getting lost in the fog, fishing in the winter when the winds and weather are predictable only in their harshness, escaping or trying to survive a shipwreck, and the like. Busy harbor scenes with fishing vessels arriving, departing, docking or moored are also favorite subjects, as are some of the related shore-based activities such as net and buoy mending, salt-making, vessel overhauling, fish curing and marketing.

What binds these works and their artists together and endows them with a thematic unity is their common source of inspiration, the New England fishing industry. Our fisheries are indeed a treasure greater than gold, and Russell Knight's collection both enriches that heritage and reinforces our appreciation of it.

# The Collection







I  
 SAMUEL F. M. BADGER  
*The Benjamin W. Latham*, ca. 1903

Oil, sight  $21\frac{1}{4} \times 35\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LL: "S.F.M. Badger."

Inscribed on back: "S.F.M. Badger. 5 Trenton St. Charlestown Mass."

The fishing schooner *Benjamin W. Latham*, shown here under full sail and probably heading out to the grounds, was built by Tarr and James in Essex, Massachusetts in 1902/03. Measuring 84 feet in length and 72 gross tons, the *Latham* was of a schooner type known as an "Indian

Header," characterized by a rounded stem. She was specifically designed by her architect Thomas F. McManus of Boston as a fast sailer but was fitted with a 48-horsepower gasoline auxiliary after two or three years of service under her owner Captain Henry Langworthy of Noank, Connecticut. In 1906 she was transferred to New York registry and operated out of the Fulton Fish Market. Later sold to interests in Puerto Rico, the *Latham* was lost off San Juan in 1943. Since this portrait of the *Latham* was acquired from a descendant of Captain Langworthy and shows no evidence of an engine, it probably depicts the vessel in her first year or two of service.

WILLIAM T. BARTOLL  
*Great Storm of 1846*, n.d.

Oil on board, 35¼ × 57 inches

Unsigned, by William T. Bartoll

On 19 September 1846 a powerful gale struck in the vicinity of Grand Bank, a major fishing ground southeast of Newfoundland. Scores of New England fishing vessels were lost in the storm, which lasted for more than two days. The town of Marblehead suffered particularly heavy casualties: of the thirty-four vessels and 238 men from the town on the banks during that storm, eleven vessels and sixty-five men were lost. This effectively ended Marblehead's importance as a fishing port.

The *Samuel Knight*, a Marblehead schooner skippered and partially owned by John Proctor, managed to survive the gale by fleeing before it rather than anchoring, as had many of the other vessels. The little two-master, built in Salisbury, Massachusetts in 1837 and measuring 64 feet 1 inch and 78 tons, not only endured but continued to serve the Proctor and Knight families until 1862. In that year she was sold, not on account of her age but because John Proctor could not locate a full crew for her during the Civil War.

This fireboard was commissioned by Captain Proctor from the Marblehead artist William Bartoll to commemorate the Great Storm. Two fishing schooners in the center are flanked on either side by a merchantman. The *Samuel Knight* is identified as the schooner on the left, fleeing the storm. The other schooner is anchored and lacks a bilgehead, which the *Knight* is known to have had.

GIFFORD BEAL  
*Fisherman with Basket*, n.d.

Engraving, strike 8¾ × 11¾ inches

Signed LR: "Gifford Beal"

This forceful etching depicts some of the harborside activities (reversed) at Rockport, Massachusetts relating to the fishing industry. A fisherman strides along the wharf with his arms and legs outstretched perhaps to keep his balance after service at sea. Behind him on the right is a little fishing sloop tied up at the famous Red Motif #1, and a dory and workboat bob in the water nearby.

Only a portion of a fisherman's time was spent at sea. Between voyages he might work in a related enterprise such as curing or packing fish, and in the off-season he might seek employment in the construction or agricultural industries. Not illustrated.

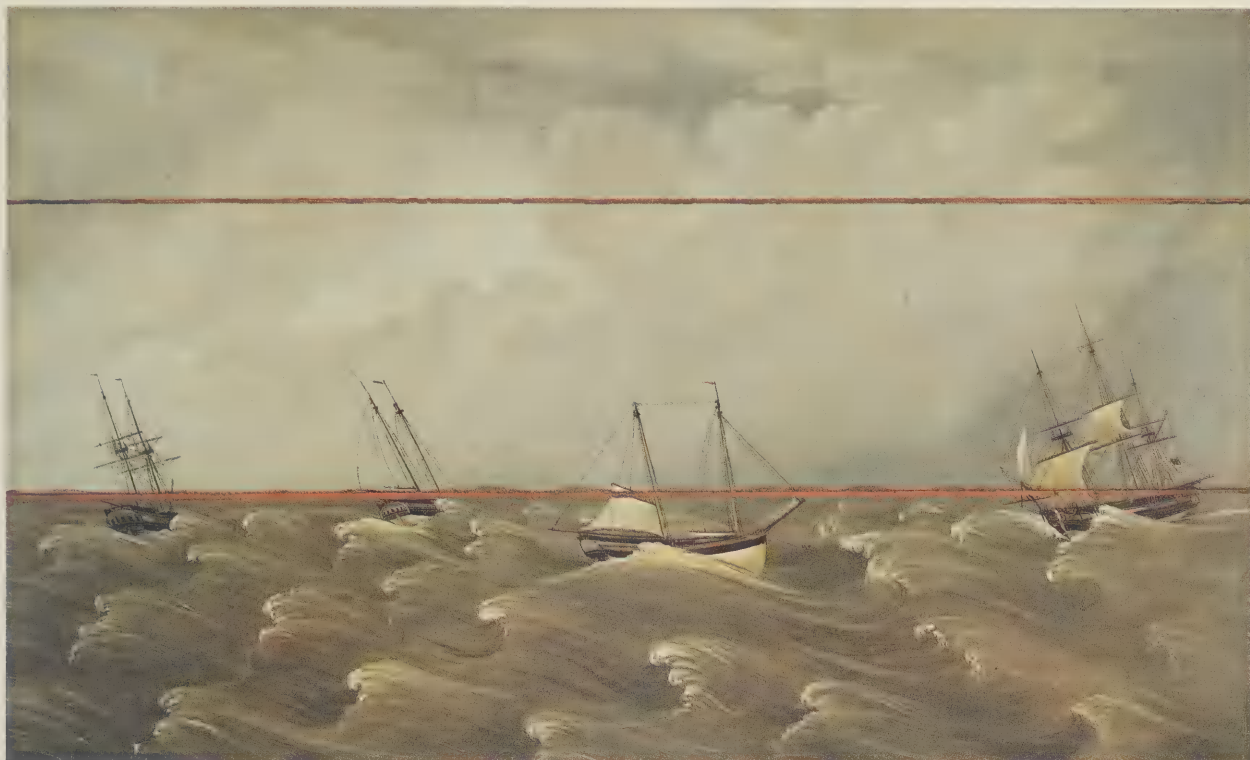
CARROLL THAYER BERRY  
*WHITE and WEATHER WORN*,  
 1960

Woodblock engraving, strike 10 × 12 inches

Signed LR: "Carroll Thayer Berry"

This graphic vignette of a quintessential Maine fishing village explores the contrasts between the shore and the land, with the curved white fishing boat hulls set starkly against the dark and weathered wharf and buildings. Scenes such as this are becoming less common today, as tourism overtakes fishing in economic importance, driving up the price of waterfront property and forcing many fishermen out of business.





2



Clock from the *Samuel Knight*.



4

5



5

JOSEPH H. BESSOM

*Marblehead Fishing Schooners on  
Grand Bank, n.d.*Oil, sight  $7\frac{7}{8} \times 11\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Unsigned, by Joseph H. Bessom

Grand Bank, located off the southeastern coast of Newfoundland, is the largest of the regional fishing grounds. It has historically been the most important source of codfish for the New England fisheries. Judging from the reduced or "snug" rig of the little schooner on the right, this painting probably illustrates fishing on the bank in the winter, when the cod is most abundant. The other vessel is anchored, with a small riding sail on the mainmast to steady her and keep her heading into the wind. Marbleheaders were the first to dare to anchor on the

banks, beginning in the early nineteenth century. Earlier, superstition had dictated that anchoring would lead to certain disaster. Not illustrated.

6

MILTON J. BURNS

*LEAPING AND PLUNGING BOWS  
UNDER, 1906*Gouache, sight  $17\frac{1}{2} \times 27\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LL: "Burns-"

Inscribed on back: "Catching the Cod/Leaping and  
Plunging"

Despite the bad weather and heavy seas that have temporarily buried the bow of their dory, these fishermen are having a good day. The man in the bow is setting a trawl for cod; once the line is set, it will be hauled over the trawl roller on the port

bow. Amidships, in a tangle of fishing gear and good-sized codfish, the other crewman is trying to avoid swamping by keeping his bow into the sea. Two of the buoys in the stern are marked "M.D.," although the fishing vessel thus identified is unknown.

This painting was published in an article by William J. Henderson entitled "The Catching of the Cod," in *The Century Magazine* LXXII (August 1906) p. 410.

7

MILTON J. BURNS

*One caught him by the collar as he was going under, 1907*

Gouache, image 15½ × 12¾ inches

Signed LL: "Burns-"

Inscribed LL: "Little Stories of Bravery-/One caught him by the collar as he was going under"

Inscribed on back: "May 6/07, Little Stories of Bravery" (*inter alia* on label)

Out on the banks during a winter storm, the worst has happened. In the background, a fishing schooner is sinking, as two men rescue one of the crew clinging to a spar floating in the frigid water. Amid other wreckage, four men in a dory toss the rescuers a lifeline.

Although the source for this scene has not been identified, morally uplifting tales of great danger and bravery on the high seas were extremely popular in the periodical literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Illustrated stories in a similar vein also were used as primers for schoolchildren.

8

MILTON J. BURNS

*Untitled, n.d.*

Gouache, sight 10⅝ inches × 17¼ inches

Signed LL: "Burns-"

Ice has formed on the oar blades of this banks dory, and her crew are obviously suffering from exposure to the winter winds and weather. Fishing forgotten, they have anchored to their trawl buoy, and are simply trying to survive until their schooner picks them up. The fishing vessel *P. Fleming* (or a variant) does not appear in the records.

9

MILTON J. BURNS

*Untitled, n.d.*

Gouache, sight 13 × 21 inches

Signed LL: "Burns-"

With his banks dory stripped of her gear and already half-swamped by the high seas around him, an old fisherman watches impassively as his boat surfs down the face of a breaking wave. Below him are trawl buoys and a spar too heavy to belong to his dory, suggesting that his schooner may have been wrecked shortly before.

Dozens of fishermen were lost each year under conditions such as these. It was not until dory fishing was superseded by the otter trawler shortly after 1900 that fatalities were reduced to any great extent in the fishing industry.









IO

MILTON J. BURNS

*GRAND MENAN FISHING BOAT,*  
1878

Engraving, strike  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{3}{8}$  inches

Signed LR: "Linton"

Inscribed LC: "Drawn by H.P. Share, from a painting by M.J. Burns, and engraved for "Harper's Weekly" by W.J. Linton."

This image is from an issue of *Harper's Weekly* dated July 15, 1878 and illustrates the Quoddy boat *Geo. Allen* tearing along under a stiff breeze with a crew of three men and a boy. The double-ended Quoddy boat, which originated in the region of Passamaquoddy Bay, Maine, was extensively used in the inshore herring fisheries in the late nineteenth century. It was best known and highly respected for its strength, utility and seaworthiness. Not illustrated.

II

MILTON J. BURNS

*Lost in the fog on the banks of Newfoundland,* 1879

Engraving, strike  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Unsigned.

Inscribed LC: "Drawn by M.J. Burns."

This print from the November 22, 1879 issue of *Harper's Weekly* vividly illustrates one of Burns' favorite themes: peril at sea. These dory fishermen on one of the banks off Newfoundland have become separated from their ship and are trying to relocate her. Although dories seldom ventured more than a mile from their schooner to set their trawls, a heavy fog could reduce visibility to no more than a few feet. As a result, by the mid-nineteenth century, most dories carried a compass, foghorn and water keg in the event of an emergency. Not illustrated.

IO

I2

MILTON J. BURNS

*Clearing the Track-On the Banks in a Fog,* 1880

Engraving, strike  $8 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LR: "A. MEACOM."

Inscribed LC: "From a painting by M.J. Burns."

Another of the dangers of fog is depicted in this engraving from the March 27, 1880 issue of *Harper's Weekly*. In the distance, a large steamship punches through the fog on one of the Newfoundland banks, scattering the fleet of small fishing vessels in her path. In the foreground, a crewman of a little double-ender, possibly a New England or Hampton boat, frantically steps the foremast in order to sail out of the steamer's track.

Transatlantic steamships have always preferred the northernmost possible route across the Atlantic, since it is shorter and therefore quicker. However, it is also more dangerous, since it cuts through the major fishing grounds off the Canadian and New England coasts. Collisions between steamers and fishing vessels were an everpresent danger, and hundreds of New England fishermen lost their lives as a result. Not illustrated.

I3

MILTON J. BURNS

*Cod-fishing,* 1885

Engraving, strike  $9 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LR: "Burns. 85"

Inscribed LC: "Drawn by M.J. Burns"

Dory trawling was the most widespread method of codfishing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This engraving from an issue of *Harper's Weekly* dated





14

October 31, 1885 depicts codfishing in a banks dory near Monhegan Island, Maine. The crewman in the bow is overhauling the trawl, a heavy line up to three miles long, with smaller lines ganged every few feet along its length. Each ganging has a single baited hook at its end, and as the fish are removed, the hook is re-baited and dropped over the side once again. The man in the center of the dory is baiting hooks; behind him are extra tubs of trawl and a buoy. The trawl is anchored and buoyed at each end and can also have additional buoys spaced along its length. Not illustrated.

14

MILTON J. BURNS  
*Off the Banks*, 1886

Engraving, strike  $7\frac{7}{8} \times 30\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LL: "Burns"

Inscribed LL: "M.T. BURNS, PINX." (sic)

Rough, wind-lashed seas dominate this scene of dory trawling off the banks, as a fishing schooner heels over in the gusty airs preceding the squall on the right. The schooner will try to retrieve her dories before the storm strikes, and in the foreground a doryman stands up to help the schooner find his boat in the high seas.

15

EVELYN CARLSON  
*Spring Overhaul (Blue Paint)*, 1981

Watercolor, sight  $20\frac{1}{4} \times 28\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LR: "EVELYN CARLSON"

In Pigeon Cove, Rockport, two fishermen apply fresh paint to the hull of their lobster-boat between seasons. In the stern of their boat is a riding sail, an anachronism from the age of sail used to steady the vessel. Not illustrated.

16

EVELYN CARLSON  
*Fingers Weary and Worn (Down Easter)*, 1983

Watercolor, sight  $18\frac{3}{4} \times 24\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "EVELYN CARLSON"

An old Maine fisherman sits by his shack repairing his lobstering gear. Fishing equipment is in constant need of overhaul and repair, and although lobster pots are now available in wire and plastic, wood (oak) remains the material of choice among most lobstermen. Wire pots rust and lose their shape after only a few sets on a rocky bottom, and plastic pots are difficult to repair and expensive to replace. Lobster pots have

open slats to allow water to circulate around the catch and to permit undersized lobsters to escape easily.

I7

SAMUEL CHAMBERLAIN  
*Barnegat Cottage-Marblehead, ca.*

1949

Engraving, strike 7 $\frac{1}{16}$  × 11 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "Samuel Chamberlain"

Inscribed LL: "Ed. 300"

Barnegat is the name for the section of the town of Marblehead, Massachusetts that was first settled. The age of this cottage, which is still extant, is evident in the number of additions that have been made over the years to the original structure on the right. When this engraving was issued in

16



the late 1940s, the cottage belonged to a fisherman, who landscaped his front yard in the off-season with various tools of his trade.

17



12

18

CARLTON T. CHAPMAN  
*Astoria Beached*, 1885

Oil, sight  $23 \times 35\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LL: "CARLTON T. CHAPMAN/NEW YORK 1885"

By 1850, Essex, Massachusetts was the shipbuilding capital of the New England fisheries. The two-masted fishing schooner *Astoria* was built there in 1851 and measured 68 feet in length and 89  $\frac{25}{95}$  tons. She was constructed for the Maddocks (or Maddox) family of Southport, Maine, where she was enrolled, and her master is variously listed as either Albert Maddocks or T. Auld.

*Astoria* is shown beached on a lee shore, with two schooners in deeper water in the background. One of the crew is offloading

the day's catch of lobsters into a dory, while two companions watch.

Carlton painted this scene in 1885, the same year that *Astoria* disappears from the record. Her subsequent career is unclear, although one source places her in Orland, Maine.

19

PAUL E. COLLINS  
*Handlining on George's Bank*, 1881

Oil, sight  $14\frac{3}{8} \times 19\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LR: "P. Collins. 81"

Built in Essex, Massachusetts in 1855, *Dauntless* of Gloucester measured 70 feet in length by  $17\frac{1}{12}$  feet in breadth. Her owner is not listed in the record, although the square and compass on the transom indicate that he was a member of the Masonic order.

18



13





19

*Dauntless* was of the schooner type known as a sharpshooter, which was characterized by a sharp entrance, a long, fine run, considerable deadrise and a shoal draft. All these factors combined to give the sharpshooter great speed.

*Dauntless* is shown anchored on George's Bank, the principal codfishing ground of the New England fisheries. She is rigged with a balance reefed mainsail to steady her and keep her head to the wind. Typically, Georgesmen fished from the deck instead of dories, and several of *Dauntless's* crew are handlining for cod over the rail. A single dory is davitted on the stern. In September 1870, while on a mackereling trip from Gloucester to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, *Dauntless* was lost with all hands (twelve men).

This painting, a copy of Fitz Hugh Lane's *A Smart Blow* (1856),\* was used for an illustration in the 1887 volume of George Brown Goode's *The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States* (Section V, volume 3, pl. 30).

20

FREDERIC S. COZZENS

*Untitled*, 1896

Watercolor, sight 14 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 11 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches

Signed LL: "Fred. S. Cozzens 96"

Marine artist Fred Cozzens was best known for his yachting and naval watercolors,

\*See Wilmerding, J., *Paintings and Drawings of Fitz Hugh Lane Preserved in the Collections of the Cape Ann Historical Association* (1974), pl. 62.



which he popularized by issuing them in limited edition lithographic sets in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Around the turn of the century, he also painted a number of New England fishing scenes, of which this work and the two examples that follow are representative examples. Cozzens was greatly respected by his patrons and admirers for his realism, accuracy and subtle, muted palette.

In the distance, a fisherman emerges from the fog. Two dorymen in their oilskins are pulling for her and have temporarily shipped their oars so that the man in the bow can hail the ghostly schooner.

21

FREDERIC S. COZZENS  
*Untitled*, 1898

Watercolor, sheet 12 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 20 inches

Signed LL: "Fred. S. Cozzens 98."

The crew in this little fishing boat are hauling in the anchor and setting the tiller in its socket in preparation for a move to a new spot. The ketch rig and construction of the boat identify her either as a Noman's Land boat from an island by the same name off Martha's Vineyard, or as a Hampton boat from New Hampshire. Two-masted double-ended fishing boats with partial decks were in widespread use in the New England in-shore fisheries during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and are considered the direct descendants of the early colonial shallop. By the turn of the century the type was so common that it was simply known as the New England boat.

21



22



22

FREDERIC S. COZZENS  
*Untitled*, 1904

Watercolor, sheet 9 $\frac{1}{4}$  × 13 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LL: "Fred. S. Cozzens 1904."

The hull of their schooner hidden behind the crest of a wave, two dorymen share a peaceful moment anchored on the banks. One is handlining while his mate enjoys a pipe.

Dories were carried out to the fishing grounds on the deck of a schooner, where they were nested in stacks of five or six on top of one another. Once the crew was ready to fish, the seats and gear were loaded aboard, and the dories were hoisted over the side into the water.

23

LEMUEL D. ELDRED

*Hauling in the Net*, n.d.Oil, sight  $15\frac{1}{2} \times 25\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LR: "L.D. Eldred."

Feeding gulls may have led these fishermen to a school of herring, which they are hauling into their boat in this singularly detailed image of an inshore fishery. Off to the left is a large brush weir, a type of fish trap made from mats of brush or tree branches attached to poles set into the shallow sea bottom. As late as 1935, weirs were used in the inshore fisheries of Maine primarily for surface fish such as herring. Although this scene is unidentified, the topography, weir and fishing boat suggest the Passamaquoddy Bay region of northeastern Maine.

24

HARRY FENN

*VIEWS IN AND ABOUT MARBLEHEAD*, 1887Engraving, strike  $13\frac{3}{8} \times 9$  inches

Signed LLC: "H. Fenn"

Inscribed LC: "DRAWN BY HARRY FENN."

Two factors contributed to Marblehead's demise as a major New England fishing port beginning in 1846. The first was the Great Gale of 1846, which destroyed a major portion of the town's fishing fleet. The other was the completion in the same year of a railroad between Gloucester and Boston, which effectively cut off Marblehead from the fresh fish market. Nevertheless, lobstering and other types of local inshore fishing continued to be practiced by Marble-



23





headers, as illustrated by this engraving from an issue of *Harper's Weekly* dated July 30, 1877. Not illustrated.

25

CHARLES H. GIFFORD  
*Headin' Out*, 1883

Oil, sight  $16\frac{3}{4} \times 23\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "C.H. Gifford-1883"

A pair of Quoddy boats race along the shore through heavy winds and seas, head-

ing for the fishing grounds. The principal fish in the Quoddy Bay region of northeastern Maine was the herring, which, when small and immature, was canned and marketed as sardines. By 1883, when this scene was painted, fishing from small craft was usually carried out with gill nets or purse seines, which were more efficient than line trawling.

The Quoddy boat, like other double-enders from New England, was descended from the colonial shallop. This example is depicted with only one mast and sail, possibly on account of the weather.



26

GORDON GRANT

*Fishermen's Haven*, 1930Oil, sight  $19\frac{1}{4} \times 23\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LL: "Gordon Grant 1930"

Possibly Gloucester-inspired, this impressionistic scene captures many of the elements common to New England fishing ports in the early years of the present century. In the foreground, two fishermen work on their net, framed by a fishing sloop at the wharf. This type of vessel, known as a "sloop boat," was built primarily in Essex

and Gloucester from around 1880 to 1907 in response to the local need for a small, fast fishing vessel less costly to build and crew than a schooner. The hull form was essentially a scaled-down version of a Gloucester schooner, and the rig was derived from the local coasting sloop.

Sloop boats were used primarily for gill netting, dory trawling and occasionally swordfishing, but the type fell out of favor with the introduction of engine power to fishing boats in the early twentieth century. Howard I. Chapelle, the leading authority on New England fishing vessels, stated in 1936 that there was only one sloop boat still in use as a fisherman in Gloucester.



27

JACK L. GRAY  
*The Handliner, 1960*

Oil, sight  $23\frac{1}{4} \times 35\frac{3}{8}$  inches

Signed LR: "JACK L. GRAY"

Inscribed on back: "THE HANDLINER" (THIS COULD BE THE "NAIL" EDDIE) Jack MAY 1960 NEW YORK CITY"

During a gray day on the banks, a lone doryman in foul weather gear watches his schooner pass by with bare topmasts. Three handlines are set over the lee rail of the dory, and in the man's hands are a reel and line for a fourth.

In New England, handlining from dories was the principal method for catching such groundfish as cod, halibut and haddock until after 1900. However, dory fishing was

dangerous, and bait was expensive, difficult to obtain and tedious to prepare and set on the hooks. As a result, when the beam trawler was introduced to New England in the first decade of the present century, it was widely adopted for bottom fishing.

28

SAMUEL W. GRIGGS  
*Manchester by the Sea, n.d.*

Oil, sight  $9\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LL: "Griggs"

A late afternoon light endows this tranquil view of Manchester, Massachusetts with a luminous, ethereal quality normally lacking in images of the New England fisheries. In the center is a pair of small boats hauling a





net, probably for herring. Behind is a barepoled fishing schooner drifting across the mouth of the harbor. This late nineteenth century scene was painted on Smith's Point in Manchester, looking northwest toward Salem and Beverly.

29

MAURITZ F.H. DE HAAS

*Untitled, n.d.*Oil, sight  $33\frac{3}{4} \times 24\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LL: "M.F.H. de Haas, NA."

A wide range of activities is portrayed in this coastal New England scene. In the foreground, the crew of two dory-skiffs are lobstering, while off to the left a pair of gaff-rigged New England boats lighter a herma-

phrodite brig. In the background, three fishing schooners slip along the rocky coastline, perhaps trying to reach port before the squall overhead strikes.

30

WILLIAM F. HALSALL

*On the Banks, n.d.*Oil, sight  $11\frac{1}{4} \times 19\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "W.F. HALSALL"

An unidentified schooner is riding on the banks, dwarfed by the heavy seas surrounding her. She is rigged with a storm trysail to steady her as the crew prepare to hoist overboard the dories nested on deck. Bearing down upon the little vessel is a herma-







30

phrodite brig, also under reduced rig on account of the weather.

Dory fishing under such conditions was extremely dangerous, and many fishermen were lost on the banks each year due to bad weather and collisions.

31

E. J. HAPGOOD

*Untitled*, 1902

Oil, sight  $17\frac{1}{4} \times 23\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "E J Hapgood/02"

Judging from the catch glittering in the bottom of their wherry, these fishermen are having a good day. One is sculling across the harbor toward the nearby wharf as his mate reels the handline stored in a basket.

The wherry, based on a Thames River workboat, was a popular shore fishing boat in New England, particularly in Maine.



31

ARTHUR W. HEINTZELMAN  
*Fisherboy*, n.d.

Engraving, strike  $9\frac{7}{8} \times 7\frac{7}{8}$  inches

Signed LR: "Arthur Wm. Heintzelman"

In the heyday of the New England fishing industry, the sons of fishermen often went to sea before their tenth birthdays and helped by cutting fish sounds and bait, baiting hooks, accompanying the men in the dories and the like. They were known as 'cut-tails,' since their share of a trip depended upon the number of fish they caught, which were counted by cutting off and saving the fish tails. As immortalized in Rudyard Kipling's *Captains Courageous*, these boys formed an important part of the crew and often worked their way up to the captain's quarters.



THOMAS M. HOYNE  
*New Ways on Banquereau*, 1981

Oil, sight  $25\frac{1}{4} \times 35\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LL: "Tom Hoyne © 1981"

This painting illustrates a chance encounter in the fall of 1906 between two fishing vessels on "Quero" bank, an offshore fishing ground one hundred miles northeast of Sable Island off the coast of Nova Scotia. Quero was an important source of halibut for the Boston and Gloucester fishing fleets around the turn of the century.

On the left is the steel-hulled screw steam trawler *Spray*, representing the new ways. Modeled after successful British steam trawlers, *Spray* was built at Quincy by the Fore River Shipbuilding Company in 1905 for

the Bay State Fishing Company, a group of Boston bankers and fish dealers. *Spray* measured 136 feet in length and 550 gross tons and employed the otter trawl method of fishing, in which a large conical net held open at the mouth by a pair of door-shaped otter boards was dragged along the ocean bottom, sweeping everything into its mouth. Today, the diesel-powered otter trawler is the most common type of fishing vessel in New England.

On the right is the schooner *Annie M. Parker*, representing the old ways. She was constructed by the Arthur D. Story Shipyard in Essex, Massachusetts for George Parker of Boston and was one of six vessels built between 1886 and 1901 to a design by the Boston naval architect Dennison J. Lawlor. Launched in 1901 and measuring 97.6 feet in length and 133.95 gross tons,



*Annie M. Parker* fished in New England until 1920, when she was sold into the Spanish salt trade. She was abandoned at sea in January 1924.

34

THOMAS M. HOYNE

*Making Fast*, 1982

Oil, sight  $25\frac{1}{8} \times 35\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LL: "Tom Hoyne © 1982"

Inscribed on back: "MAKING FAST"

The broadbill swordfish appears in dwindling numbers each year in New England

waters around June, and remains until September or October. This painting depicts swordfishing off Nantucket in the 1930s, when the landings were greater than for any other period before or after.

In the summer, swordfishing schooners were rigged with a foretopmast for the lookouts and a pulpit for the striker, as shown on the schooner to the right. Once the swordfish was "ironed," a watertight keg and line attached to the harpoon were heaved overboard, and the fish dragged it along until exhausted. A dory then towed it back to the vessel, where it was hoisted aboard, as illustrated by the schooner *Benjamin Thompson* on the left.





34

*Benjamin Thompson* was built in 1923 by the Arthur D. Story Shipyard in Essex, Massachusetts and measured 65.5 feet in length by 19.5 feet in breadth and 47 gross tons. She was constructed for William Thomas and others of Portland, Maine. By the 1930s, only the Portland fishing fleet still had American captains; the Gloucester fleet was skippered entirely by Portuguese and Canadians.

35

THOMAS M. HOYNE  
*Daily Bread*, 1983

Oil, sight  $27\frac{3}{4} \times 35\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "Tom Hoyne © 1983"

After the depression of 1872, many New England fishermen sought a more economical alternative to the traditional two-masted fishing schooner. The sloop boat, essentially a single-masted scaled-down version of the schooner with a rig derived from merchant sloops in the coasting trade, was the result.

26



35

Ranging from 35 to 60 feet in length, the sloop boat required a crew of only five or six men, unlike the schooner which might ship up to twenty crew on a winter trawling trip.

The plumb-stemmed sloop boat *Vesta* was built in 1898/99 by John Bishop in Gloucester and measured 52.5 feet in length by 15 feet 2 inches in breadth. She is shown riding steady on her jumbo just after dropping off two dorymen, who will separate and set their trawls. Aft *Vesta* may be seen another sloop, rigged with main and gaff topsail, jumbo and jib.

36

JOHN HUTCHINSON

*A Good Haul*, 1982

Watercolor, sight 14 × 18½ inches

Signed LR: "Hutchinson '82"

Inscribed LL: "A good haul"

The weir, an inexpensive form of fish trap, was used primarily in Maine in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although weirs were usually made of woven mats of brush, occasionally nets were substituted where the currents were weak. They

27



were normally placed along the shore, on a ledge or in a channel, to trap salmon, shad, alewives and the sardine herring.

37

JOHN HUTCHINSON

*Bringing Ashore the Nets, 1982*

Watercolor, sight  $13\frac{1}{2} \times 27\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LL: "Hutchinson '82"

In the New England shore fisheries, the haul seine was used mainly for herring. The simplest type of seine, it consisted of a long net of twine attached to the shore at one end. The other end was towed through the water by a boat back to the land, encircling the catch.

In this scene, a pair of fishermen are off-loading their net from the boat onto a horse-cart, inspecting it for damage at the same time. Their craft, called a seine boat, was a



36

specialized type of boat initially developed as a lapstrake double-ender in Gloucester in the late 1850s. It originally averaged 20 feet in length but later measured around 38 feet when employed in the mackerel seining fleets.

37



38

JOHN HUTCHINSON  
*The Lobster Dory, 1982*

Watercolor, sight 14 × 20<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches

Signed LL: "Hutchinson '82"

The best lobstering is in the spring and fall. In the spring the pots are set offshore in deep water and then are gradually moved inshore during the summer, following the lobsters. In the autumn, the lobsters again move offshore, and the fishermen follow their migration once more. The New England lobster fishery has undergone a gradual decline since the turn of the century, due to overfishing and the lobster's slow maturation period.

In this scene, two fogbound lobstermen empty a pot into their dory, as a group of fishermen behind haul the catch from their weir into the boats. In the distance, a fishing schooner is barely visible trying to catch the light airs. Not illustrated.

39

JOHN HUTCHINSON  
*Winter Scalloping, 1983*

Watercolor, sight 12 × 16<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches

Signed CL: "Hutchinson '83"

Scalloping in New England is a wintertime activity, centered in Massachusetts around Cape Cod and the Islands. In this fishery, a dredge, comprising a metal yoke and a mesh net, is dragged along the shallow sea bottom until full. It is then hoisted and emptied onto the culling board, where the scallops are separated and bagged. The culling board is then swept clean and the process begins again. In New England, only the white adductor muscle of the blue-eyed bay scallop is eaten; the remainder is discarded.

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40  
MARSHALL W. JOYCE  
*The Sea Moss Gatherer*, 1974

Oil, sight  $23\frac{1}{2} \times 35\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LR: "Marshall W. Joyce 74"

During the colonial period, New Englanders reportedly imported sea moss for fertilizer before they discovered that both it and seaweed were available along their own shores. Today, harvesting continues on a small scale primarily in Maine, and the products are used for animal feed, fertilizer, foliar spray and as a vitamin supplement for human consumption.

This painting depicts an Irish moss gatherer at work in the early morning in War-

ren's Cove, Plymouth Beach, Massachusetts. Using a long-handled rake, he is scraping the moss off the rocks below the tideline and loading it into his boat. When he has finished, he will return to shore and dry and process the harvest.

41  
MARSHALL W. JOYCE  
*Sea Ghost*, 1977

Photolithograph, image  $15 \times 19\frac{7}{8}$  inches

Signed LR: "Marshall W. Joyce"

Inscribed LL: "281/950

A lobsterman in his new oilskins is rowing along the shore in his dory, setting his pots at intervals. In the background, a fogbound



schooner slips past under reduced rig, feeling her way slowly along the deepwater channel. Not illustrated.

42

MARSHALL W. JOYCE

*The Sculler*, 1980

Photolithograph, image 16 × 23<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches

Signed LR: "Marshall W. Joyce"

Inscribed LL: "Artist's proof"

At dawn, a lobsterman sculls his dory through flat water and a heavy mist toward his lobsterboat. The stern of his boat is loaded high with pots, ready to be baited and dropped overboard. Although lobstering requires a considerable outlay for a boat and pots, it is one of the few commercial fishing activities that can be pursued by a single person. Not illustrated.

43

MARSHALL W. JOYCE

*The Clammer*, 1982

Oil, sight 23<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> × 35<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches

Signed LR: "MARSHALL W. JOYCE: A.S.M.A. ©"

Archaeological evidence indicates that Indians were harvesting clams along New England's coastline at least eight thousand years ago, making clamming the region's oldest known fishing industry. Today, clams are gathered in much the same way as in antiquity: by raking or digging them up from beds located in the littoral zone along protected beaches or in coves or estuaries. One of the few fishing activities that requires neither a boat nor expensive gear, clamming is equally popular among commercial and recreational fishermen.

43



44



44

MARSHALL W. JOYCE

*A Good Haul*, 1982

Oil, sight 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> × 17<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches

Signed LR: "MARSHALL W. JOYCE ASMA"

The crew of this Quoddy boat have lowered sail and are straining to haul in their gill net filled with herring, probably in the vicinity of Eastport, Maine. The herring are slightly oversized for sardines and will either be pickled in brine or smoked in the round and then marketed as bloaters or red herring.

The head of a fish is trapped in the mesh of a gill net, and it cannot escape since the

gills spread open when it attempts to back out. The gill net is more efficient than handlining or line trawling, requires no bait, and is especially useful when fishing from small boats, since it can be handled easily by as few as two men.

45  
MARSHALL W. JOYCE  
*The Lobsterman*, 1982

Oil, sight  $23\frac{3}{4} \times 35\frac{3}{8}$  inches

Signed LR: "MARSHALL W. JOYCE A.S.M.A."

A lobsterman chops bait for his pots, occasionally throwing a piece to the seabirds flocking around the stern of his boat. Once the pots are baited, the buoy and line are carefully checked and the pot is dropped overboard. Lobster pots are usually set on a sandy bottom near rocks; normally a fisherman will check them every day or so and collect the catch.

46  
MARSHALL W. JOYCE  
*Mending the Net*, 1983

Oil, sight  $19\frac{1}{2} \times 29\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LR: "MARSHALL W. JOYCE ASMA"

Gill nets on drying reels were a common sight in many New England fishing ports in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as this view of a Marblehead wharf in the 1930s attests. Gill nets were far more efficient than line fishing, and their catch always fetched a higher price at market since the fish were fresher and in better condition. However, the initial cost of the net



45



46

was considerable, and it had to be dried and repaired at the end of each day's fishing in order to last.

47  
MARSHALL W. JOYCE  
*Salt Works-Cape Cod*, 1983

Watercolor, sight  $21\frac{3}{8} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LL: "MARSHALL W. JOYCE"

Salt for preserving the catch was one of the most critical commodities in the early New



47

England fisheries. Initially imported from the Caribbean and various Mediterranean ports, it was produced in New England by boiling sea water as early as 1624. During the Revolution, solar evaporation of sea water was developed by a Cape Codder, and by the 1830s there were 440 saltworks on the Cape.

As this scene of the Orleans saltworks illustrates, seawater was pumped by a windmill into pine-planked vats approximately nine inches deep. Movable covers either protected the vats from the rain or exposed

them to the sunlight. After several weeks of evaporation and purification, the salt was sufficiently crystallized to be raked out and warehoused.

In the 1850s the industry began to decline, as the demand for fresh fish increased and the railroads began importing salt from the salt domes of Louisiana and Texas. After the Civil War most of the Cape Cod saltworks were abandoned.





48

MARSHALL W. JOYCE

*The Longrakers*, 1983Oil, sight  $22\frac{7}{8} \times 34\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LR: "MARSHALL W. JOYCE ASMA"

The quahog is a large, hard-shelled species of clam found along the shores of southern New England. It lives just under the sand in water as deep as thirty feet.

The most common method of harvest uses a flexible rake up to forty-eight feet in length. The fisherman lowers it to the bottom and allows the winds and currents to drag him along until the rake basket is filled. It is then hoisted to the surface and emptied onto the culling board, where the catch and culch are separated. Using this method, a day's catch by a single fisherman can reach 300 pounds.

49

JOHN R. KEY

*Untitled*, n.d.Oil, sight  $15\frac{5}{8} \times 29\frac{7}{8}$  inches

Signed LL: "John R Key"

The topography in this late nineteenth century view of Marblehead Harbor from the southeast is dominated by Abbot Hall, which houses the town offices and meeting hall. Along the far shore is a group of fishing schooners, yachts and small craft, attesting to Marblehead's continuing maritime interests despite her reduced stature as a major fishing port by this time.

50

CLARE LEIGHTON

*The Net Menders*, n.d.Wood engraving, strike  $6\frac{3}{8} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "clare leighton"

Inscribed LL: "32/300 The Net Menders"

Fishing nets are often torn by large fish trapped in the mesh or by rough handling. As a result, these expensive pieces of gear are in frequent need of repair, as depicted in this engraving created for the Marblehead Arts Association. Not illustrated.

51

VICTOR MAYS

*Beam Trawler Resolute Reefed on Georges Bank, February 1892*, 1980Watercolor, sight  $14\frac{1}{4} \times 21\frac{3}{8}$  inches

Signed LR: "Mays '80"

The ketch *Resolute* was built in 1891 by the Arthur D. Story Shipyard in Essex, Massachusetts to a design by Charles Story and the U.S. Fish Commission. She measured 85 feet in length by 22 feet in breadth and 95 gross tons. America's first beam trawler, *Resolute* was an almost exact copy of the British offshore beam trawlers used in the North Sea fisheries.

In 1892, after four unprofitable fishing trips, her owners decided she was too light for beam trawling on the banks, and *Resolute* was re-rigged as a schooner and outfitted for dory trawling. On two voyages in 1894, she lost a total of six men overboard, and in 1896, while on a halibut trip off Cape Breton, the ill-fated vessel struck a rock and was lost along with one crewman.

*Resolute* is depicted on her last voyage as



51

a ketch. After twenty-five days on George's Bank, she returned to Gloucester 8 February 1892 and landed 20,000 pounds of haddock and sole.

52

WILLIAM MEYEROWITZ  
*Seiners*, 1920

Colored engraving, strike  $11\frac{7}{8} \times 14\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "Wm Meyerowitz"

Signed LL: "Wm Meyerowitz 20" (in plate)

The crew of two small boats transfer their net from one craft to the other, in preparation for the day's fishing. Not illustrated.

53

DONALD ALLAN MOSHER  
*Headed for the Banks*, 1980

Watercolor, sight  $11\frac{1}{2} \times 17\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LL: "Donald Allan Mosher- '80'"

The schooner *Hattie A. Heckman* slowly works her way out of Gloucester Harbor, her sails slack in the light early morning airs. She is rigged with bare topmasts for winter fishing and is probably heading for nearby George's Bank.

*Hattie A. Heckman* was a *Fredonia*-type schooner built in 1895 by the Arthur D. Story Shipyard in Essex, Massachusetts. She was constructed for Michael Walen & Sons





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of Gloucester and measured 90 feet in length by 24.6 feet in breadth and 105.37 gross tons. Not illustrated.

54  
NATHOLIE J. NORDSTRAND  
*A Tidal Salt Pool*, 1983

Watercolor, sight  $17\frac{1}{4} \times 25\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "Natholie J. Nordstrand AWS"

Salt was the most popular preservative for fish prior to the 1840s, when icing the catch was introduced. One of the oldest and simplest methods for producing it was to simply let seawater into a shallow tidal pool, block off the entry and let the sun and

wind evaporate the water. After several weeks, the salt crystallized sufficiently to be collected and distributed. As this scene indicates, all that was needed for this method was a bit of waterfront property, a few trays and barrels, a rake and a hand barrow.

55  
WILLIAM E. NORTON  
*Herring Catch '68*, n.d.

Oil, sight  $27\frac{1}{4} \times 49\frac{1}{8}$  inches

Signed LL: "W<sup>m</sup>.E. NORTON"

The fishing fleet is out in force in this dramatic image of the herring fishery off the



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Isles of Shoals, bordering Maine and New Hampshire. In the foreground, the crew of an Isles of Shoals boat is setting a gill net. Just off her bow, the crew of a similar craft are raising sail, readying for a move to a new spot. Their net is "made," or coiled, abaft the foresail. In the distance are several fishing schooners, en route to or from the grounds farther offshore.

The Isles of Shoals, a group of eight rocky islands, were discovered in 1614 by Captain John Smith, who modestly named them after himself. They were settled shortly afterward by fishermen, who eventually changed the islands' names. Most of the mackerel and herring caught from small boats in the vicinity of the Isles were marketed in Gloucester and Boston. The local boats, called Isles of Shoals boats, were regional variants of the traditional two-masted double-enders common throughout north-

ern and central New England in the nineteenth century.



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LOUIS NOVAK  
*Fish Pier, Boston, n.d.*

Gouache, sight  $7\frac{1}{8} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$  inches

Signed LC: "LOUIS NOVAK"

Although Boston has never had a particularly large fishing fleet of its own, the city has served as the region's largest fresh fish market for more than 150 years. Until after the turn of the century, most of the landing, packing and marketing activity was handled at a number of wharves and piers along the waterfront, with no centralized location or organization. However, in South Boston in 1913/14 an immense new fish pier was built, which provided excellent docking for the fishermen and modern, sanitary facilities for the fish dealers. The South Boston Fish Pier is still in use today.

This view of the pier depicts a number of fishing schooners rafted near the northeastern end of the 1,200 foot structure. The catch is being offloaded into crates for transporting to the dealers inside.

57

STEPHEN PARRISH  
*Marblehead, n.d.*

Engraving, strike  $8\frac{1}{4} \times 14\frac{1}{8}$  inches

Signed LR: "Stephen Parrish" (in plate)

Signed LL: "S. Parrish" (in plate)

Abbot Hall, housing town offices and a meeting hall, governs this view of Old Marblehead by the father of the famous American artist Maxfield Parrish. Two fishing schooners are drawn up on the shore above the high water line, not far from a cluster of





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fishermen's houses. In the foreground three men are stepping the mast of the fishing sloop *Chas. A. Platt*. Although her name is clearly visible at the stern, the *Platt* does not appear in the registers; a common occurrence for many small inshore fishermen.

58

CHARLES PARSONS  
*Marblehead Morning*, 1884

Oil, sight  $14\frac{3}{4} \times 25\frac{7}{8}$  inches

Signed LL: "Charles Parsons, 1884"

Three schooners are preparing to leave on a fishing trip in this summer's morning view of Lovis Cove painted from the vicinity of Fort Sewall, Marblehead. By 1884, when this scene was painted, tourism was well on its way to replacing fishing as Marblehead's principal industry, and yachts and large

summer homes were beginning to dominate the waterfront.

59

HENRY JARVIS PECK  
*The Day's Catch*, 1907

Oil, sight  $24\frac{1}{4} \times 19\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "Henry J. Peck"

An old fisherman in his oilskins stands in the cockpit of his catboat, both hands on her tiller to steady her in the high seas. Scattered around him are various tools of his trade: a bait knife, a reeled handline, a few extra fishhooks embedded in a cork and a corncob pipe on the seat. At his feet is a basket overflowing with cod.

This painting was used for the cover illustration of the July 1907 issue of *Success Magazine*, a monthly "periodical of American life" published in New York around the turn of the century.

40



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CHARLES S. REINHART  
*MAKING HOME FOR CHRIST-*  
*MAS, 1882*

Engraving, strike  $16\frac{7}{8} \times 11\frac{7}{8}$  inches

Signed LL: "C.S. Reinhart/Paris '82" (in plate)

Signed LR: "W. Zimmermann Sc." (in plate)

Two fishermen dressed in heavy foul weather gear are bent over the tiller of their fishing schooner, trying to guide her back to port through a winter storm. Subtitled "And keep our bones from Davy Jones," this two-page engraving was published in a special Christmas supplement to *Harper's Weekly* dated December 8, 1882.

Some fish, particularly the cod, were most abundant on the banks during the winter. Although this was the most dangerous and difficult season to be at sea, cold and heavy weather was seldom a deterrent to the New England fishermen. Not illustrated.

61

WILLIAM T. ROBINSON  
*Untitled, n.d.*

Oil, sight  $15\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LR: "W.T. Robinson."

Traditional Gloucester dories and full-bellied Marblehead gunning dories bob in

61





the shallow waters off Tucker's Wharf, Marblehead, in this view from the southwest. Anchored farther offshore is the magnificent steam yacht *Erl King* of 1894, with pennants flying.

Although named after its principal use as a bird-hunting boat around Marblehead, the double-ended gunning dory was also pressed into service in the shore fisheries, particularly for lobstering.

62

PETER W. ROGERS

*Dolphin of Gloucester*, 1982

Oil, sight  $23\frac{1}{2} \times 35\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LL: "Peter W. Rogers"

The Eastern-rigged dragger *Dolphin* was built in 1946 by Newbert and Wallace in Thomaston, Maine for Ivan R. Williams of Gloucester. Measuring 78.4 feet in length by 21.1 feet in breadth and 115 gross tons, she was powered by a 250-horsepower diesel engine.

On a traditional otter trawler, the net is set and hauled over the side, as depicted. When hauling, the doors, which keep the trawl open on the sea bottom, are first secured alongside. The net is then hoisted aboard, open end first. The narrow "cod end" is brought aboard last and opened, spilling the catch on deck.

Today, the classic wooden side trawlers are gradually being superseded by steel stern trawlers, which are more powerful, easier to work and safer, in permitting the trawl to be set while heading into the seas.

62



63



63

ERIK A.R. RONNBERG, JR.

*New Year's Day*, 1976

Watercolor, sight  $21\frac{1}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "© Erik A.R. Ronnberg, Jr., 1976"

The steeple of the Congregational Church overlooks this view of the north inner basin of the harbor at Rockport, Massachusetts. In the foreground is the 32-foot *Fair Susan*, built in 1958 in the backyard of her owner-captain Ralph C. Nelson. Used for party



65

fishing in the summer and longlining or lobstering during the remainder of the year, *Fair Susan* is typical of the local multi-purpose gasoline-powered fishing boats. Today, however, these wooden boats are being replaced by fiberglass hulls of similar design.

65

WILLIAM D. STILLE

*Mackerel Seining, ca. 1860, 1980*

Oil, sight  $19\frac{1}{2} \times 29\frac{1}{2}$  inches

Signed LL: "WM. d. STILLE 1980"

Prior to the 1850s, mackerel were caught mainly with jigs on handlines. However, around mid-century purse seines were introduced in New England for surface fishing, and shortly thereafter specialized seine boats were developed to set the nets.

Once the mackerel were spotted, the seine boats and dories were hoisted overboard, often leaving only the cook aboard the schooner to steer. The boat crews then payed out the seine, encircling the fish. The

64

JOHN SELMAR-LARSEN

*Untitled, 1923*

Oil, sight  $15 \times 9\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LL: "Selmar-Larsen/1923"

A decrepit old fisherman's shack on Front Street, Marblehead sits overlooking the mouth of the harbor, a symbol of Marblehead's former status as New England's leading fishing port. Not illustrated.

44



66

ends of the net were brought together and the seine was pursed, or closed at the bottom edge. The schooner was brought alongside and the fish were dip-netted aboard.

This scene illustrates a fleet of mackerel schooners on a summer's day in the 1860s off Isle au Haut, Maine. In the foreground seine boats are setting the seine, while behind them two schooners race for the same school of mackerel. The name of the schooner in the foreground is apocryphal.

66

DON STONE

*Hauling Back*, 1980

Watercolor, sight  $20\frac{3}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "Don Stone"

In response to a redfish boom, the wooden-hulled side trawler *Judith Lee Rose* was built in 1952/53 by the Southwest Boat Corporation in Southwest Harbor, Maine. Constructed at a cost of \$200,000 for the Rose Fisheries, Inc. of Gloucester, she measured 103.9 feet in length by 24.2 feet in breadth and 198 gross tons. Throughout her life she was one of the largest and finest fishing vessels in the Gloucester fleet.

Shortly after an extensive refit in 1980 for multi-purpose fishing (trawling, longlining





67

and seining), *Rose* was seized by the federal government and seven of her crew were imprisoned for drug smuggling. Under new ownership she continued to fish, but after an engine room fire on 1 March 1982, she was abandoned at sea and presumed sunk.

67

PAUL STRISIK  
*Old Boston Wharf*, 1983

Oil, sight  $19\frac{1}{4} \times 29\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "P. STRISIK/© 83"

A small fleet of brightly painted Italian trawlers are rafted together in this scene of Boston's Commercial Wharf in the late

1940s. After a modest beginning at the turn of the century, by the 1940s the Italians were a strong force in Boston's fishing fleet, and they remain active today both there and in Gloucester.

68

JAMES E. TAYLOR  
*Brand New Seine-Portland Harbor-Maine*, 1981

Pen and ink, sight  $16\frac{1}{8} \times 29\frac{3}{8}$  inches

Signed LR: "James E Taylor 81"

Inscribed LL: "Brand New Seine-Portland Harbor-Maine"

Portland has remained one of the most active fishing ports in Maine, as this scene il-



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lustrates. In the center, the crew of a small fishing boat are loading a seine from a reel on the wharf onto their deck. The breadth of the local activity is suggested by the presence of lobster pots on one side of the boat and a little dragger on the other. Behind is a larger, more modern trawler, with all of the latest electronic aids visible on her masts. Not illustrated.

69

JAMES G. TYLER

*Untitled*, n.d.

Oil, sight  $14\frac{1}{4} \times 17\frac{1}{4}$  inches

Signed LL: "JAMES G. TYLER"

Many of the Irish who emigrated to the Boston area in the middle of the nineteenth century were fishermen, and when they came, they brought with them a type of small fishing vessel from the west coast of Ireland known as the Galway hooker. The little cutter-rigged hooker, normally between 30 and 38 feet in length, was built in this country beginning in the late 1850s with very few differences from its forebear in County Galway. The type remained in





use in the Boston fisheries until around the turn of the century.

This view illustrates one of the Boston Irish hookers in a heavy sea, with her fore staysail struck and her gaff mainsail reefed down. The bowsprit also could be reefed, or run in, when the vessel was in port or in heavy weather.

70

JAMES G. TYLER  
*Close Quarters*, n.d.

Oil, sight  $21\frac{3}{8} \times 17\frac{3}{8}$  inches

Signed LR: "J.G. TYLER"

This lively scene is dominated by a bald-headed Boston Irish hooker, probably gill-

netting for herring a few miles offshore.

Her dory is preparing to pay out the net, while a sloop and schooner cross her stern. Once netted, the catch is placed in a fish hold or well abaft the bow cuddy and then transported to the Boston market for auction.

71

JAMES G. TYLER  
*Lost in the Fog*, n.d.

Oil, sight  $20\frac{1}{2} \times 27\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Signed LR: "JAMES G. TYLER"

Anchored offshore in a thick pea soup fog, these dorymen appear in dire straits. To attract their vessel's attention, they have



# This Indenture Witnesseth,

That *Moses Mary* of a place called *Cape Hatfield* in the County of *Humberland* Labourer

Hath put *him* self, and by these Presents doth voluntarily, and of *his* own free Will and Accord, ~~and with the Consent of~~

put and bind *his* self Apprentice to *John Oakes* of *Marblehead* in the County of *Essex* *Fisherman* to learn *his* Art, Trade or Mystery, and with *him* the *sd* *John* *Mary* *his* after the Manner of an Apprentice to Serve from the Day of the Date hereof *for and during the Term of Eight Years & Seven Months*

During all which said Time or Term, the said Apprentice *him* said Master *Oakes* well and faithfully shall Serve, *his* Secrets he shall keep close, ~~by~~ Commandments lawful and honest every where he shall gladly obey: he shall do no Damage to *his* said Master *Oakes*, nor suffer it to be done by others, without letting or giving reasonable Notice thereof to *his* said Master *Oakes*, he shall not waste the Goods of *his* said Master *Oakes*, nor lend them unlawfully to any: At Cards, Dice, or any other unlawful Game or Games he shall not play: Fornication he shall not commit: Matrimony

he shall not contract: Taverns, Ale-Houses, or Places of Gaming he shall not haunt or frequent: From the Service of *his* said Master *Oakes* by Day nor Night he shall not absent *him* self; but in all Things and at all Times, he shall carry and behave *him*self towards *his* said Master *Oakes* and all *him*, — as a good and faithful Apprentice ought to do *to ward them* during all the Time or Term aforesaid.

AND the said *John Oakes* for *him* self & for *his* *Wife Mary* doth hereby Covenant and Promise to teach and instruct, or cause the said Apprentice to be instructed in the Art, Trade or Calling of a *Fisherman* by the best Way or Means *he or she* may or can (if said Apprentice be capable to learn) and to find and provide unto said Apprentice good and sufficient *Meat Drink apparel washing and Lodging and all Housekeeping* and to teach *him* to read write & *Capston* during the said Term: and at the Expiration thereof shall give unto the said Apprentice *with* *Two* good Sutes of apparel *the one* *new* *fittling* for all parts of *his* Body

In Testimony whereof the said Parties have to these Indentures interchangeably set their Hands and Seals, the *Eleventh* Day of *September* in the *Fourth* Year of the Reign of Our Sovereign Lord *George the Third* of Great-Britain, France, and Ireland, KING, &c. Annoque Domini, One Thousand Seven Hundred and *Twenty Nine*

Signed, Sealed and Delivered  
in Presence of

*Edward Bowen*  
*nickey Bowen*

*John Oakes*

rigged up an oar with a tattered rag at its peak, and the crewman in the bow is sounding a fog horn.

Although few New England fishing vessels carried charts or navigational instruments until recently, experienced captains could determine their exact locations simply by taking soundings. Knowing where he dropped off his dory and aware that his men would have anchored near that spot, the skipper should have little difficulty relocating the boat.

72

PETER VINCENT

*Silent Bank*, 1978

Lithograph, strike 12 × 20⅞ inches

Signed LR: "Peter Vincent"

Inscribed LC: "Silent Bank"

A Gloucester fisherman stands on the deck of his schooner, gazing at the surrounding sea. Beside him are two nested dories, with the uppermost rigged for hoisting and filled with buoys, trawl tubs and line. Not illustrated.

73

UNKNOWN

*VIEW OF THE TOWN OF MARBLEHEAD, MASSACHUSETTS*, 1854

Engraving, strike 8 × 13¼ inches

Unsigned

This engraving from an 1854 issue of *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion* suggests that Marblehead remained active in the fishing industry well after the Great Storm of 1846 and the completion of the

Gloucester-Boston railroad. The harbor is filled with fishing schooners, and along Marblehead Neck in the foreground, codfish are drying on the fish flakes as a vessel on the right discharges her catch. The men standing alongside the dories are rinsing the salt off the fish prior to flaking it. Not illustrated.

74

Marblehead Fishing Indenture, 1769

Letterpress and ink, sight 11 × 6 inches

Signed LC: "John Oakes"

Signed LL: "Edward Bowen/Mary Bowen"

During the colonial period, an indenture was a common method for a youth to learn a trade and an inexpensive source of labor for a master. This rare document dated 11 September 1769 witnesses the indenture of the laborer Moses Merry (Murray) of Cape Natick (Neddick), Cumberland County to John and Mary Oakes of Marblehead, Massachusetts. At the time of the agreement, Cumberland County reached from the Androscoggin River to the New Hampshire border.

In exchange for his lengthy and restrictive servitude, Merry will learn reading, writing and ciphering as well as the business of fishing. Oakes has also agreed to provide Merry with room, board, washing and "all nesses-sareys," and two suits of clothing at the expiration of the agreement.



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